



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

Lehrern am Herzen liegt, bitten wir, in ihren Kreisen dahinzuwirken, dass dem Seminar solche junge Männer und Mädchen zugeführt werden, die befähigt sind und in sich die Neigung zum Lehrerberuf fühlen. Wir versuchen sie weiterhin solche, die eine berufliche Weiterbildung in der Richtung der Kurse c and d suchen, auf das Seminar aufmerksam zu machen. Alle weitere Auskunft soll gern vom Unterzeichneten erteilt werden. Auch steht der Prospekt der Anstalt frei zur Verfügung.

Milwaukee, 10. Mai 1916.

*Das Nationale Deutschamerikanische Lehrerseminar.*  
(The National German-American Teachers Seminary)

*Max Griebisch*, Direktor.

---

### **Activities, Methods and Principles of German Clubs in American Colleges.**

---

By **Heinrich Keidel, Ph. D.**, Instructor at Ohio State University, Columbus, O.

---

(Concluded.)

---

It was very interesting to see the kind of plays that were given. Three factors were decisive. 1. The condition, size, facility of the stage. 2. Expenses of costumes. 3. Practice in the use of the foreign language for every day conversation. Most clubs seem to agree that those plays are preferable which are given primarily for the sake of the actors rather than for the sake of the audience. Elaborate performances like *Wilhelm Tell* (Cornell) and *Der arme Heinrich* (Wisconsin) were literary events, to be sure, but required months of very careful preparation and an overcoming of almost insurmountable obstacles. For many reasons, therefore, plays of secondary literary value, (save dear old *Hans Sachs*) were generally preferred, because they fulfil the requirements of a students' club better. For the history of the drama, or rather of the theater, it is interesting to note the plays that were given by American students. Space does not permit giving the names of all the plays. We must be content to know that 58 different plays were reported as having been staged once. Those plays, that were reported staged twice, were: *Jugendfreunde*, *Unter vier Augen*, *Die ferne Prinzessin*, *Als Verlobte empfehlen sich*, *Die deutschen Kleinstädter*, *Hochzeitsreise*, *Faust-Puppenspiel*, *Flachsmann als Erzieher*, *Er ist nicht eifersüchtig*, *Versalzen*, *Schimmel*. Three times were reported: *Einer muss heiraten*, *Fahrender Schüler im Paradies*, *Journalisten*, *Minna von Barnhelm*, *Der Knopf*, *Ein deutsches Weihnachtsspiel*; four times: *Eigensinn*; five times: *Alt-Heidelberg*.

One sees, *Schönthan*, *Fulda*, *Moser*, *Benedix* and *Sachs* are by far the favorites. But it is urgently necessary that a guide to German plays,

adapted for American college clubs, be published by someone of wide experience. I am sure that in that way good and valuable literature may still be discovered; for example Geibel's excellent student comedy „Meister Andrea" or Wilbrandt's „Die Maler". A faint beginning of that sort has already been made by K. Schauermann in *Monatshefte für deutsche Sprache und Pädagogik*, XVI, 2.

The great preference that is given by the German clubs to theatrical performances springs from natural impulse, which curiously enough teachers have not as yet applied to its full advantage. Too much methodical stress was laid upon the performance, too little stress on the rehearsals. The author has learned that the French department of Western Reserve University has abolished altogether the usual conversation courses, substituting instead theater courses, in which each of two divisions of the class is alternately audience and performers. Since I strongly believe in that kind of work and regard the usual conversation courses (often with the help of books!) as of very questionable value, I mention with most gratified appreciation the Schauspielerverein of the University of Nebraska. Although here the particularly happy talent and enthusiastic personality of Professor Amanda Heppner seem to participate in the success, the report shows. nevertheless, that a systematic plan by far overtops the personal leader.

I think it may prove of great advantage to other clubs if I reprint Professor Heppner's report verbatim:

„Der deutsche Schauspielerverein wurde im Jahre 1910 gegründet und darf auf sein Wirken und seine Tätigkeit in den vergangenen fünf Jahren recht stolz sein. Der Verein versammelt sich einmal im Monat und zwar am 2. Mittwoch um halb acht Uhr im Universitäts-Tempel, wobei die Mitglieder sich zahlreich einfinden, die Vereinsgeschäfte erledigen, einer Aufführung eines Einakters beiwohnen und den übrigen Teil des Abends gesellig verbringen und sich unterhalten, während einfache Erfrischungen wie Eis mit Waffeln oder Schokolade mit Kuchen verabreicht werden. Studenten bekleiden die Ämter, aber eine Lehrerin aus der deutschen Abteilung übernimmt die Regie, wobei vorgeschrittene und im Spielen erfahrene Studenten für die regelmässigen monatlichen Aufführungen grosse Hilfe leisten.

Die Beamten bestehen aus einem Präsidenten, Vize-Präsidenten, Sekretär, Kassierer, Regisseur und einem Exekutiv-Komitee. Das letztere besteht aus dem Präsidenten, dem Regisseur, einem Mitglied der deutschen Fakultät und zwei Studenten, die vom Verein erwählt werden. Dieses Komitee bestimmt, was für Spiele, Mehrakter, bei den öffentlichen Aufführungen zum Besten gegeben werden sollen, und welche Kandidaten für das Drama sich am besten zu den verschiedenen Rollen eignen. Es werden im Oktober gewöhnlich zwei Proben angezeigt, worüber das Exekutiv-Komitee sein Urteil fällt. Bei der einen Probe erscheinen die Kandidaten, die sich einige Wochen früher gemeldet haben und den Wunsch geäußert haben, in den Verein aufgenommen zu werden. Solche Kandidaten müssen die kleinen Abschnitte aus den Klassikern, modernen oder sonstigen Dramen, die sie auswendig gelernt haben, mit andern Genossen

zusammen — fünf Minuten wird jeder Gruppe erlaubt — aufführen, und das Komitee entscheidet, ob die Kandidaten die deutsche Sprache genügend beherrschen und genügend Talent im Spielen besitzen, um wirklich etwas zu leisten, dem Verein eine wahre Stütze zu sein und selber einen Nutzen davon zu ziehen. Im vergangenen Oktober haben sich vierzig Studenten an der Probe beteiligt, und zwanzig sehr tüchtige Herren und Damen wurden aufgenommen. Danach folgt die zweite Probe, woran sich die Mitglieder beteiligen, die in der öffentlichen jährlichen Aufführung mitwirken sollen. Das Exekutiv-Komitee bestimmt auch hier wieder, wer am besten zu den Rollen passt. Der Verein zählt augenblicklich 43 Mitglieder, 23 Damen und 20 Herren, die verpflichtet sind, einmal im Jahre mindestens in einem kleinen Einakter vor den Vereinsmitgliedern bei den monatlichen Versammlungen aufzutreten. Dieses Jahr herrscht solche Begeisterung, dass viele schon zum zweitenmal ihren Teil zur regelmässigen Versammlung beitragen. Obendrein, wenn sie die zu diesem Zwecke festgesetzte Probe gut bestehen, dürfen sie auch im Mehrakter mitwirken, welcher gewöhnlich Mitte Januar aufgeführt wird. Die hiesigen Deutschen sind für unsere Sache so begeistert, dass wir bei den Aufführungen uns eines sehr gebildeten Publikums und eines grossartigen Besuches rühmen dürfen. Der Reingewinn fliessen gewöhnlich in die Vereinskasse, die die Hoffnung hegt, im Laufe der Zeit nicht nur die Unkosten der monatlichen Versammlungen bestreiten zu können, sondern auch die nötigen Möbel, Vorhänge, Teppiche und andere Einrichtungen anzuschaffen. Bis jetzt haben wir kein eigenes Heim und daher auch keine Bühneneinrichtung. Das Theater benutzen wir nur bei dem Jahresfest. Die Mitglieder bezahlen keine Beiträge, nur die Eintrittsgebühr von 50 Cents. Ich füge einige Programme bei, die bezeugen, dass wir kein oberflächliches Ziel gesteckt haben, dass wir wirklich ernstlich uns an die Arbeit gemacht haben. Die folgenden Einakter dienten als eine Art Laboratorium, eine Vorbereitung auf den Mehrakter.

Lehmans Kleinod.	Eine muss heiraten.	} Mädchenbühne.
Einer muss heiraten.	Das Gespenst in der Pension.	
Er ist nicht eifersüchtig.	Schwerhörig.	
Der Schimmel.	Drei Tanten auf einmal.	
Ein Knopf.	Der Kaffeeklatsch.	
Eigensinn.	Das Gänschen vom Lande.	
Der Dritte.	Gänschen von Buchenau.	
Das amerikanische Duell.	Jugendliebe.	
	Unter vier Augen.	

Am 7. Mai führen wir zum Besten der Vereinskasse, wo Ebbe herrscht, da wir den Reingewinn der Januarvorstellung zum roten Kreuz geschickt haben, Schillers „Neffe als Onkel“ auf .....

The enclosed programs record those performances: 08 Miller und Müller; 09 Alt-Heidelberg; 10 Köpenickerstrasse; 12 Minna von Barnhelm; 13 Die Journalisten; 14 Flachsmann als Erzieher.

Now we shall return to the other clubs again. *The war* does not seem to have affected the activities of German clubs. Almost no program mentions the war at all, although Trinity College reports the dissolution of the club which for twenty years was connected with the local club at Hartford,

Conn. Wisconsin and Nebraska sent their proceeds to the American Red Cross, while Harvard forwarded the proceeds of the Journalisten performance to the German Ambassador. Only Cornell seems to have deliberately championed the German cause, for all the 15 addresses given last year in the G. C. treat the war-question from the German point of view. Moreover, the newspaper, published by the Indiana club did not seem to be afraid of championing Germany. That friction has often occurred I am quite sure, but I think almost every club would agree with the resolution of the *Intercollegiate League of German Clubs of America*, as follows: "Whereas, we as students of German in American Universities have learned to admire much that is good in German science and ideals, and Whereas, we have acquired respect and admiration for our fellow-students in German Universities; Be it resolved, That Americans whatever their sympathies in this present war, should in no wise share the animosities generated by it; and Be it resolved, That we hereby wish to make public expression of our sincere admiration for our German fellow-students and their bravery and steadfastness in offering themselves for their beloved Fatherland; and Be it resolved, That we express our sincere wish that the friendly relations and close connection existing between American and German universities, particularly between German clubs of American universities and the students in German universities, may be fostered, and the exchange of professors, an important factor for the promotion of better understanding between nations, be further developed."

Here, now, I have to explain what the I. L. G. C. A. stands for. In 1913 several eastern clubs founded a league whose purpose is at the present time "the promotion of good fellowship among the universities and colleges of America and between the universities of America and Germany, to encourage the study of the German language and the German customs with the view of more closely linking our country with the German nation in ties of sympathy and friendship." 16 universities belong to the League: Brown, California, Columbia, Dartmouth, Harvard, Lafayette, Middlebury, Pennsylvania, Swarthmore, Syracuse, Temple, Valparaiso, Vermont, Wesleyan, Williams, and Yale.

The actual work they have done among themselves has been the same as the first part of my article indicates that I have tried to do among all the colleges. I am indebted to their investigation only in so far as I have learned that in some clubs beer and pretzels are served, that some have their own library and that some celebrate commerses for guests and have baseball teams with other clubs. The report of 1914 closes with the words: "No active attempt was made during the last year to open negotiations with the universities in Germany, we having devoted our energy to establishing the League in this country on a firm basis. This having been ac-

completed, I would heartily recommend that we aim during the next year to bring about a connection with the German universities."

This I confess seems rather premature. The report of 1915 complains that they are not prompt in answering their own letters, so that it is very questionable whether they have their "firm basis." Furthermore it seems to have occurred to no one that a German university student is a man of considerable maturity and by no means comparable to an American college boy. Why does not the John Hopkins Graduate Club belong to this league? There can be no results in respect to foreign relations so long as the league does not exclude all the undergraduates, unless they try to found a kind of Wandervogel in Germany for American students of German for the summer time. The league is certainly a splendid idea, but before one goes to Europe, the work in America should be done more thoroughly. So far as I know, no one has made the slightest attempt yet to come into contact with any Middle West university. Moreover, no one has tried to attain a certain uniformity in respect to club organization; no distinction has been made between men and women in coeducational clubs; no attempt has been made to publish a league-paper such as the Indiana club has already done admirably and successfully; no endeavor is shown to cultivate a certain fraternity spirit as Wisconsin has tried to do by establishing a fine club house. Sixteen Eastern colleges do not represent the American student of German at all and I doubt very much whether a German university student, coming to this country, is especially interested in a German college club unless he is invited as a lecturer or a teacher. The trouble is, there are no colleges in Germany.

## II.

I have emphasized from the beginning that I do not attempt to furnish exhaustive statistical material that could be used by a thorough historian. I have tried merely to draw a sketch, to convince the reader that examining club activities is very important, for the methods of teaching foreign languages as well as for a better understanding of the duties of the teacher. I do not doubt, that the development of the American college will tend to a stronger separation between graduate and undergraduate work, between graduate and undergraduate teacher. Therefore it is necessary to define strictly the activities of the latter as affecting the social life of their students. Every report makes it clear, that the teacher has a strong hand in the management of the German clubs, although the vigorous rule, that the president and the treasurer must be members of the faculty was found only at Wisconsin and Ohio State. Many clubs ask only one teacher to be one of their officers. However, when students only are the officers, the faculty indirectly manages the club anyhow.

And herein lies the difficulty. Last year Grinnell College flatly refused to have a club, and Amherst writes: "The reason for the abandon-

ment of the German club was, briefly, a lack of genuine interest on the part of the students and a feeling on my part that while they were willing to be amused and entertained by the faculty they were not willing to do enough work to make any contributions to the activity of the organization." How differently sound other reports, as for instance, that of the Plaudertasche (Cal.): "The results produced are admirable. Students enter into the programs with zest, and from having re-told the contents of a book read, having taken part in the rendering of a play, etc., it frequently happens that students whose interest might well have been but a transient one are led to continue further studies in German and perhaps to major in the subject." Others show a similar enthusiasm although I had the impression as if even there the teacher is actually the leading spirit, so that I came to the conclusion that the students themselves lack power of initiative. Although Illinois seems to be proud of the fact that no teacher cares about the Verein at all, I see from the last year's program that almost the entire entertaining was done by the faculty.

After these conclusions the real and vital problem arises, which naturally concerns every foreign language club as well as German: *What is a language club?*—I think everyone is willing to define it as a supplement of the class on a social basis, or—to avoid the ugly word class room—it should be a social gathering of those students who bring to the foreign language a higher interest than that of passing the examination questions. This interest might be of various kinds. 1. It is merely practice. The club in this case is a Berlitz School. 2. The interest is an intellectual curiosity for a foreign culture, whose contributions to American civilization are recognized. 3. An outspoken, onesided national enthusiasm for the entire foreign nation. The last point has grown much sharper naturally since the outbreak of the war; heretofore all three points drove the student more or less consciously into the club. The teacher, of course will be decidedly enthusiastic for that nation whose language he teaches, just as a Greek teacher will feel with Demosthenes and a Latin teacher will rejoice over Germania. So it is the teacher who will create that enthusiastic atmosphere which the student craves. But where? That is the point. Some teachers are excellent in the monarchical class room and awkward in the demagogical parlor of the ordinary club. With other teachers the contrary is true.

Cannot the curiosity, the enthusiasm and the desire to talk be satisfied in the class room? Could we not have a regular class in which only German or French songs are sung? Cannot the performance be given by the students of the theater class? Why the terrible burden of a club? The answer is easily given. The enormous extent and size of most of the institutions, the excess of elective courses and the dangerously exaggerated social instinct especially among women, prevent the arrangement above mention-

ed. If a great majority of students want to sing French songs, then the singing lesson has to be given in the evening, because the schedule will allow no other time, and therewith a French club is established. Iowa sharply rejected the establishment of a German club, because it is supposed to take too much of the students' time. The faculty permitted the students to meet if they wished, but with absolute informality. This idea, it appears to me, does not quite fit into the general conception of an American college, which wants to be more than merely an institution of learning. European institutions on the whole care for effective class room work only, and leave to the initiative of the students the spending of their free time, nay the German gymnasium with great mistrust even tries to prevent the formation of social groups and only with great reluctance will a teacher take up any work that exceeds his preparation for the class room. The American college on the contrary tries to do more than train the minds of the students. It tries to teach social duty not only in theory but also in practice. It tries officially to direct all the wantonness of liberty on the part of the students into the channels of honest and upright citizenship and bourgeoisie; it tries to bring upon the campus everything a student's heart desires and everything sanctioned by conventional morality. Accordingly it burdens the teacher to such an extent that the fact that an American college teacher teaches less than a German teacher is merely a matter of justice.

Now, in a college of four thousand students, for instance, it is very convenient and easy for a foreign language department, to rid itself of all social duties, if it can procure one teacher whose talents are especially adapted to entertaining students, who do not know how to entertain themselves. If this one hapless instructor is an actor, musician, business manager, organizing genius, orator, singér, Santa Claus at Christmas and last not least an interesting bachelor, his colleagues very likely and quite naturally will facilitate his club successes by not interfering. Thereby they gain ample time for research work and the publishing of big books, to bring them fame and advancement, while their colleague, actor, musician, club manager, etc., is considered only a very, very nice fellow.

I believe I have touched here a sore point, more serious and important than it might appear at first glance. No one will deny that a college is also subject to development, which must correspond with the ambition and spirit of the whole nation. No school in any country can be a nation within a nation. Unquestionably America's ambition is to have a "place in the sun." America will compete with other nations in everything that makes life worth while: in art, in trade, in industry, in morals, in skill, in efficiency, thoroughness and social justice. Now, I believe, if the college is conscious of these national ambitions, it simply must draw the conclusion that its mere social aims and activities must be sacrificed to make



possible more efficient class room work, cooler, harder, more sober, more strenuous, more thorough, and therefore more efficient. A recent German grammar says learning a foreign language is no play but work. This implies to most students that it is very disagreeable. But life itself is disagreeable and it is only worth living, if we get something out of its misery and that means work. And after we are so strongly convinced of the necessity of work, we may get the same pleasure from work as from play. Then work is play.

Now if Amherst, Grinnell and Iowa discourage German clubs they are on the right road. They intensify the class room work so thoroughly that the students become so hungry for more nourishment that they will form a class or club on their own initiative in which their own personalities find intellectual if not artistic expression. And when they have reached this point they no longer need the teacher. Very interestingly Oregon writes: "Members of the faculty rarely take up the evening, the idea being that the club is a student's organization in which they always are to do the work." This club imposes duties upon its members. If, for instance, a play is prepared, every member is obliged to learn certain sentences, roles, quotations, etc. If this club were managed entirely by the teachers, it would be a veritable class and no student would appear, but as it is, they come eagerly, for they look upon their club program as a series of "stunts," given by themselves for themselves.

I believe, I am justified in drawing the following conclusions: The foreign language club should be left entirely to the students. A teacher should only appear if invited. The teacher should influence the club indirectly through the work in the class room. The presence of a teacher for the sake of supervising the spoken foreign language is absolutely unnecessary, since the student's freedom in speaking more than offsets any grammatical mistakes he may make. Moreover the constant correct use of the language in the class room will act as a corrective. Only in dramatics perhaps might the teacher have a controlling hand, but then it must be considered as a part of actual class room work, for which the student should be given credit.

But this principle should count for all colleges: a foreign language club is as little necessary as the ornamentation of the exterior of a house is necessary to the comfort of the occupants. The chief stress must be laid upon efficient class room work. The club must be the place in which the student finds opportunity for his own enthusiastic self-expression, which he cannot display freely and freshly in the sober and stern class room. The club atmosphere must be the work of student's own soul and spirit. If he cannot himself achieve this self-expression, then there should be no club. Anything else is, after all, though doubtless unconsciously, merely playing to the gallery and gratifying idle vanity. The center of the class is the teacher, the center of a student's club should be the student.